

Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMIMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7948

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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SUBJECT: HAMDI VISIT TO OMAN AND UAE RESULTS IN SOME NEW
FOEIGN AID AND PROMISES OF VISIT BY SHAYKH ZAYD

1. COMMAND COUNCIL CHAIRMAN IBRAHIM AL-AHAMDI LED
HIGH POWERED DELEGATION TO OMAN (APRIL 18-22) AND
ABU DHABI (APRIL 22-23) LAST WEEK. ALTHOUGH LITTLE OF
SUBSTANCE RESULTED FROM EITHER TRIP, WITH OMAN VISIT HIGH
LEVEL YAR DELEGATIONS HAVE NOW VISITED EVERY "MUSHRAQ"
STATE WITH EXCEPTION OF LEBANON AND PDRY, THUS PUTTING SEAL
ON ONE OF HAMDI'S FOREIGN POLICY GOALS OF STRENGTHENING
YAR'S CONTACTS WITH MODERATE ARAB FRIENDS AS COUNTER TO RADICAL
TRENDS IN REGION.

2. BREIF ABU DHABI STOP (HAMDI'S SECOND IN PAST YEAR)
WAS MEANT AS GESTURE TO UAE LEADER, SHAYKH ZAYD, FOR HIS
UNSTINTING SUPPORT FOR YAR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.
ACCORDING TO PARG SOURCES, SHAYKH ZAYD HAS PROMISED TO
BUILD HOUSE, SPEND "PART" OF HIS SUMMER VACATION IN
YEMEN, IF ONLY TO SEE SABAEN RUINS AROUND MARIB WHICH
HAVE INTERESTED HIM IN PAST. ABU DHABI APPARENTLY
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AGREED TO EXPANSION OF TV FACILITIES TO OTHER

PARTS OF COUNTRY, BUT AID WAS NOT MAJOR SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION.

3. DELEGATION MEMBERS PARTICULARLY IMPRESSED WITH WARMTH AND EXTENT OF WELCOME RECEIVED IN OMAN, WHICH THEY DESCRIBE AS POSSIBLY BETTER THAN THAT ACCORDED KING KHALID. SULTAN QABOOS REPORTEDLY DONATED OUTRIGHT GIFT OF DOLLARS THREE MILLION TO BE USED AS YARG SAW FIT. MINSTATE FOR DEVELOPMENT IRYANI ONOW LOOKING FOR WAYS TO USE FUNDS AND IS CONSIDERING AID FEASIBILITY STUDIES FOR PROPOSED LIGHT INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS AS ONE POSSIBLE AVENUE.

4. AGAIN, HOWEVER, AID WAS NOT MAJOR SUBJECT IN OMAN. HAMDI VISITED DHOFAR, APPARENTLY WITH GREAT SATISFACTION AND INTEREST, AND THUS PUT SEAL OF APPROVAL OF NORTHERN YEMEN ON MILITARY OPERATIONS AND FOREIGN PRESENCE WHICH SOUTHERN YEMEN HAS SO BITTERLY CONTESTED. EVEN MORE THAN HAMDI'S HIGHLY EQUIVOCAL STATEMENTS IN OMAN ABOUT YWP-PDRY "UNITY" TALKS, VISIT IS MEASURE OF YAR DISTRUST AND DISLIKE OF ADEN REGIME.

5. YEMENIS REPORT THAT OMANS WERE HIGHLY CIRITICAL OF SAUDI DIPLOMACY TOWARD PDRY AND ALSO OF SAUDI UNWILLINGNESS OR INABILITY TO DEVISE NORMAL AND CLOSE FORMS OF CONSULTATION WITH FRIENDS. YEMENIS OF COURSE HAVE SIMILAR COMPLAINTS, AND SAID SO.

COMMENT: WARMTH OF FEELING OF HAMDI PERSONALLY FOR BOTH QABOOS AND ZAYD IS STRIKING, PARTICULARLY WHEN CONTRASTED WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL STRAINS IN HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH SAUDIS. ON EMOTIONAL BASIS, THESE TIES MAY CONTRIBUTE AS MUCH AS SAUDI CASH TO REORIENTATION WHICH HAMDI MAKING IN YAR'S TRADITIONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH SOVIETS AND RADICAL ARAB STATES. TRIP THUS GIVES YEMENIS SOME (IF FALSE) SENSE OF ALTERNATIVES TO SAUDI GENEROSITY, SAUDI POLITICAL COORDINATION, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SAUDI PLANS FOR PENINSULA. TRIP ALSO GAVE YEMENIS CHANCE TO ASSERT AGAIN THEIR INTEREST AND ROLE IN GULF SECURITY MEASURES. THIS INTEREST IS PROBABLY HARD TO TAKE SERIOUSLY IN GULF BUT IN THIS CORNER OF PENINSULA IT IS CLEARLY EFFORT TO SEEK ALTERATIVE TO AND PROTECTION AGAINST WHAT YEMENIS REGARD AS DANGEROUSLY SUCCESSFUL LEFTIST TRENDS IN PDRY, SOMALIA AND ETHIOPIA.

SCOTES

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